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HISTORY
RELATING TO
MANUAL
OF
PRAYERS, INSTRUCTIONS, PSALMS
AND HYMNS
IN
MICMAC IDEOGRAMS
USED BY
MICMAC INDIANS OF EASTERN
CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

BY
REV. JOHN LENHART, O.M., CAP.
PITTSBURGH, PA.

WORKS OF

Father C. Leclercq, Micmac Missionary
of
Restigouche - P.Q.
1675 to 1687

Father P. Maillard, Micmac Missionary
of
Cape Breton
1735 to 1762

Publishers:

Father C. Kauder, Redemptorist
of
Tracadie - Nova Scotia
1866

Father R. P. Pacifique, Micmac Missionary
of
Restigouche - P.Q.
1921

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P R E F A C E

Dear Reader:

The printing of this beautiful booklet covering the history of our Micmac Ideographic Manual is to enable you to know the work and Divine achievement of our devoted and self sacrificing missionaries in the early days of our civilization, in order that we may as Micmac Indians understand our Christian faith in a clear manner.

We regret very much however that on account of your inability to read these unique characters we are unable to present our Ideographic Manuel to you, but we sincerely hope that an interesting history attached to this great book of ours will be of interest to you.

Should you have an opportunity to visit any of our Missions in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Newfoundland, you will see for yourself the importance and necessity of worshipping in our graceful language. Thanking you for any support you have given to any of our Missions in the past, and humbly pray that you will continue to do so in the future.

INDIAN MISSIONS.



THE OLD and new edition of Micmic Ideographic Manuel has played a very great part in the religious instruction of the Micmac Indians. It is written in hieroglyphic characters, each of which represents a word, serving as little more than aids to the memory.

The use of marks, of various kinds as mnemonics devices was widespread among American Indians from time immemorial. The Micmacs, however, and the Crees have been the only tribes, in the North at least, that have ever used such ideographs for literary purposes. The hieroglyphic characters still in use among the Micmacs, go back to the famous missionary Pierre Maillard in 1738.

The honor of having first used the Micmac hieroglyphic characters for religious instruction belongs to Father Leclercq, a Missionary in Gaspesia; his report, his description, and the repeated mention of these characters leave no doubt on this point. But nothing or next to nothing of his system has come down to us. All the hieroglyphics reproduced in this book and many more still preserved are the works of Abbe Maillard. It is next to impossible that a man, as learned as Maillard should not have known what his Recollect predecessor had written about these hieroglyphics. The fact

that several of these characters resemble each other closely proves that Maillard must to some extent have profited by the older system. Yet Maillard has developed and improved Leclercq's hieroglyphics so much that we can hardly blame him, when he ascribes to himself the invention of the Micmac Hieroglyphics. Be it as it may, this book is certainly and wholly his.

Abbe Pierre (not Antoine Simon) Maillard, a member of the Paris Seminary, was in a true sense the "Apostle of the Micmacs." Landing at Louisbourg, August 13, 1735, he labored among the Indians till his death, August 12, 1762. In recognition of his services at the pacification of the Micmacs, he was invited by the British officials to take up his residence in Halifax, where he was living in the fort and where the first Catholic chapel was fitted up for the use of the Micmacs and Acadians. Maillard received a salary of 100 pounds sterling like any minister of the Church of England and was accordingly the first Catholic priest who was ever paid a salary by the British Government. This saintly priest died at Halifax, highly esteemed by the British officials, and was buried in St. Paul's cemetery. The members of the King's Council of Halifax were the pall bearers at his funeral and the curate of St. Paul's, Thomas Wood, read the

funeral service according to the ritual of the Church of England over his remains. And at the grave of this last priest of the French Regime stood with heads bowed the prime movers of that tragedy of the Acadian dispersal, some survivors of the scattered Acadian people, and the proud Micmacs to pay their tribute to the devoted Catholic priest (while the narrow-minded Rector of St. Paul's, the Rev. John Breynton,) and the fanatical people of Halifax kept aloof and prevented even an entry of the burial into the records of St. Paul's and an insertion of a short death notice into the Boston newspapers.

On the death of Abbe Maillard the Micmacs and Acadians of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton were deprived of the ministrations of a priest. In this plight the Micmacs had at time some of their children baptized and married by different Protestant ministers and good-naturedly listened to their sermons. Accordingly the missionaries of the Church of England entertained high hopes for a speedy "conversion" of the Catholic Indians. But they were to be disillusioned before long.

On December 10, 1763, Governor Wilmot of Nova Scotia wrote to the Lords of Trade of London that he must obtain a priest for the Indians. But, on

May 8, 1764, the Governor was informed that no priest would be sent (and that Protestant missionaries may wean them from their prejudices.—Yet the Micmacs demanded a priest again and the Governor's appeal met again with a refusal. In spite of reiterated appeals in 1765 and 1766 the home Government would not permit a priest to come to Nova Scotia. But the British officials foreseeing certain ruin of the colony, if the Indians were driven to fatal extremities, became ever more insistent in their demand of a priest for the Micmacs. On September 3, 1766, Lieutenant Franklin informed the Lords of Trade that the Micmacs had threatened repeatedly to destroy the English settlements and that they are determined to have priests, whether the Government permitted it or not.) On the following day, the Rev. Breynon wrote from Halifax, that the inhabitants are pleased with the refusal of the Government as to the admittance of priests and that he is persuaded that the Micmacs would soon be brought to listen to the instruction of the Anglican missionaries. The British officials, on their part, pointed out to the home Government over and over that any attempt to convert the Micmacs by Protestant missionaries would only exasperate them and would be fatal to the English settlements, so that the Governor of Nova Scotia was finally in 1767 authorized by the Board of Trade

to write to the Bishop of Quebec for a priest, and the King approved formally the appointment of the Catholic priest among the Micmacs on October 12, 1768.

About the middle of October 1767, the Rev. Charles Francis Bailly, a young priest of 27 years of age, left Quebec for the River St. John, where he stayed over winter ministering to the Indians of this district. On July 19, 1768, Father Bailly arrived at Halifax where he was received by the British Official in the most cordial manner. And these British officials at Halifax assisted this polished French priest in every possible way. It was then that reports from Halifax were pouring into the Colonial Office at London singing the praises of this Catholic priest, a thing hitherto unheard of. Abbe Bailly received the same salary of 100 pound sterling like the ministers of the Church of England. He is the second Catholic priest who was officially salaried by the British Government since the time of the Reformation.

Abbe Bailly labored four years at Halifax among the Micmacs and Acadians. In May 1772 he left Halifax (on account of the annoyances caused by the bigoted people) and returned to Quebec. "The Officials," Abbe Bailly wrote to his Bishop "are very friendly to the Catholics, but the people are fanatics."

Since Abbe Bailly had left informing the officials at Halifax, he was expected to return and was paid for a year and a half after his leaving. On October 5, 1774, the Secretary of State, Dartmouth, wrote to the Governor of Nova Scotia: "Should the report of Bailly's death prove true, the King intends to discontinue the appointment of a priest, unless the Indians insist on the fulfillment of the stipulation which was the only ground for so extraordinary an indulgence." But the Micmacs had meanwhile left the neighborhood of Halifax and scattered over the whole province.

Not quite a year after the departure of Abbe Bailly, the Rev. Joseph Bourq commenced his missionary labors among the Acadians and Micmacs in the northern districts of Nova Scotia. He was soon joined by other priests so that from that date (1773) the Catholic priest was never missing in the land of the Micmacs. Yet those priests did primarily care for the French and Irish settlers, and the Indians in their reservations did sometimes not see a priest for a whole year. In 1849 the Protestants thought it best to make use of the good opportunities of "converting" the Catholic Micmacs. Accordingly on November 12, 1849, the Protestants formed at Halifax the Micmac Missionary Society and appointed the Rev. Silas Tertius Rand,

a Baptist minister at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, as their missionary among the Micmacs paying him 200 pounds sterling a year with 40 pounds sterling for travelling expenses. Rev. Rand was a great linguist and had mastered the Micmac language to perfection. His diversified missionary labors consisted in travelling, preaching, collecting subscriptions, translating and reading the Scriptures to the Indians. The Ninth Annual Report of the Micmac Society (1858) prints the names of 997 subscribers of five shillings at 32 different places who contributed 238 pounds, 15 shillings, 6 pence. The total expenses for the year ending October 1, 1858, amount to 310 pounds, 11 shillings, 1 pence. Sometime after the year 1865 the Micmac Missionary Society became defunct. Nevertheless Mr. Rand continued his work among the Micmacs till his death October 4, 1890, relying for his support on his own resources.

The result of this protracted missionary activity of Mr. Rand was nil. The Micmacs treated him very civilly, listened attentively to his readings of the Bible or his sermons, discussed with him the points of difference between Catholics and Protestants, read his printed translations of parts of the Bible, but remained steadfast in their faith. He made only one convert

among the Micmacs, one who had been laboring as a colporteur among his people, and, since May 1858, also as a preacher receiving a salary of 78 pounds sterling. But strong drink ruined this poor Indian, the outcast of his tribe who on his deathbed called out for a priest but did not get him. Thus died the first and last Protestant Micmac (1882.) The Indian was more steadfast in his faith than his white brother. Today we count a small number of Protestant Acadians, descendants of French Catholics who adopted the religion of their oppressors in the dark days of persecution towards the close of the 18th century. Yet to-day as two hundred years ago every Micmac is a staunch Catholic.

All successors of Abbe Bourg, as the pastors of Carleton, have ministered regularly to the Micmacs of Restigouche and of New Brunswick. Rev. C. F. Painchaud (1780-1814) has left a Micmac catechism. Rev. Jos. M. Bellenger (1814-1819) prepared Maillard's Micmac Grammar for publication: it was finally printed in 1864. Besides he published a booklet with prayers and alphabet in Micmac and made extensive researches on the manuscripts of Maillard which latter are still preserved in the archives of the Archdiocese of Quebec, comprising a bulky volume.

There has been a resident missionary at Restigouche since 1844. All these priests have ministered to the Micmacs either directly or through interpreters. Rev. J. P. Saucier (1859-1869) has left in manuscript a Micmac catechism and several instructions. The Rev. Ronald McDonald who had been resident priest till 1881 at Pictou before he was made bishop of Harbour Grace spoke Micmac readily. The Micmacs loved him very much.

At Tracadie and Halifax, Father Vincent of Paul, the founder of the Trappist Abbey of the place, labored zealously among the Micmacs from 1815-1837. On Baie Ste.-Marie another saintly missionary the Abbe J. M. Sigogne, labored with no less zeal from 1799-1844. Father Dagnaud writes of him (Vie. p. 202): "The reputation of Fr. Sigogne spread to the most secluded Indian villages of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and Ste-Marie became the center of continual Micmac pilgrimages which were to survive long after the death of the missionary." Father Sigogne has left some Micmac manuscripts. A score of other priests, both secular and religious, have occasionally ministered to the Indians. But none, except Father Kauder, seems to have used the ideograms or even realized their import.

It was in the year 1836 that the Micmacs received this most active missionary, who was to devote again his whole time and all his energy to their service. The Rev. Christian Kauder was born at Eteelbrueck in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg on May 3, 1817, and was ordained priest on August 24, 1840. In 1844 he came to America where he joined the Redemptorists at Baltimore making his profession, February 2, 1845. Hereafter he labored at Baltimore. St. Mary's Elk County, and Rochester, N.Y. On account of ill health he left the Congregation of Redemptorists in 1852. About four years later he went to Nova Scotia and made his home with the Trappists of Tracadie. Father Kauder labored incessantly among the Micmacs for fifteen years till the beginning of the year 1871, when he was forced by ill health to discontinue his work. He returned in May 1871 to Luxembourg to recuperate. On November 14, 1877, he left his country again to return to his mission among the Micmacs. This is the last we know of him.

From 1871 till 1894 the Micmacs of Nova Scotia were deprived again of regular ministrations of a priest. In 1894 the Rev. Father Pacifique, a Capuchin, born at Valigny in France in 1863, took charge of the largest settlement of this Catholic tribe at Restigouche, from

where he visits the other missions all over the country. He is the most successful missionary since the death of Rev. Abbe Maillard. In the mastery of the Micmac language he has no equal.

We remarked already, that Abbe Maillard is the author of our hieroglyphics. In the course of time he composed a number of manuals in these ideograms which, copied by hand with immense labor, were committed to memory by the Micmacs. These were their only literature for one hundred years. All these books remained in manuscript until 1866, when Father Kauder had the famous Micmac book printed in hieroglyphic characters at Vienna. In his report to the Archbishop Gregory Scherr of Munich, Father Kauder writes from Tracadie on October 13, 1859, as follows: "Last year I received one thousand florins from the Ludwig-Verein, and this year the same amount of thousands florins was given me by the same society. Up to this time this mission has not received any other financial support. The thousand florins received in 1858, were used to complete the church at Maligomich, to pay the salary of my Indian teacher and to defray the cost of transcribing and collecting into a volume the Micmac hieroglyphics. These hieroglyphics contain all the doctrines of our religion. On ac-

count of continuous copying these manuscripts had been sadly deranged and no single family possessed a complete set. I had them all copied at great cost and properly arranged. This manuscript consists of three parts, catechism, instructions, and hymns. I had intended to have it multiplied by handwriting and to present a copy to each family. However, I saw before long that this plan would not work on account of waste of time and money. I wrote to Count Louis of Couenhoven, C. SS R., at Vienna. He will have it printed. I will send the manuscript to Vienna in a few days. This book is an absolute need for this Indian mission, since these savages cannot read any other writing besides these hieroglyphics. I never could find out with any degree of certainty how these hieroglyphics have come to them which they prize so highly. The Way of the Cross was missing among the hieroglyphic papers. I shall translate these prayers for the edition." In a later report Father Kauder writes to Archbishop Scherr from Tracadie on February 21, 1862: "I cannot express in words how grateful I am for the contributions of one thousand florins which the Ludwig-Verein had sent me last year (1861) as well as the year before last (1860). Next to God we owe everything to you of what has been done among these Indians up to this time. About one hundred years ago the last

missionary of the Micmacs died. Since that time these Indians had neither a priest of their own nor a missionary who spoke their language. The old battered manuscripts were the only means next to God's grace which preserved the Catholic faith among them. It is surprising how quick the Micmac children learn to write these hieroglyphics with ease. The Micmacs book will be printed at Vienna at the expense of the Leopoldinen-Verein." Two volumes are finished already and I expect to receive any time the proof sheets of the last volume. I think that the work will be ready this Summer. This hieroglyphic book is not only useful, but moreover, an absolute necessity for this mission." On October 2, 1862, Father Kauder wrote the preface to the Micmac book.

Yet Father Kauder was to be disappointed in his expectations for four years. He had received in 1862 only advance sheets. Many dies had to be cut yet and types formed to represent all the hieroglyphics used in the book. In 1864 he went to Europe to make the last preparations. Finally in 1865 printing commenced in the Imperial Printing Office at Vienna and the work was ready by the end of 1866. The Leopoldinen-Verein paid the first installment of 500 florins for printing in 1865, a second installment of 500 florins in 1866,

and the remainder of 509 florins, 16 kreuzer in 1867. Accordingly the cost of printing amounting to 1509 florins 15 kreuzer of \$755 according to the monetary value of those days.

The Micmacs book as printed at Vienna is the glory of the mission literature of the nineteenth century. It is the only book ever printed in hieroglyphic characters of Micmac. (The types were specially cut and cast for this edition. Their total number runs up to 5703. They have not been used ever after. The typographical workmanship is without a flaw, far superior to all attempts at reprints of specimen pages in American books and periodicals. The work is only marred by a few mistakes due to the rather imperfect knowledge of Micmac on the part of the editor, the Rev. Chr. Kauder. The Micmac book "is a marvel of literary skill and perseverance," writes the Protestant Missionary Rand, "but so far as use is concerned, to say nothing of its theological errors, it is one of the grossest literary blunders that was ever perpetrated." A very amusing estimate!

Unluckily only the first shipment of these precious books ever reached America, while the great bulk of them was destroyed in a shipwreck. Father Kauder's successor, the Capuchin missionary, strained every nerve

to have the book republished. There was but one obstacle to overcome, lack of funds. Other benefactors were not forthcoming, till finally the Capuchin Fathers of the United States came forward and contributed such an amount that the work could be accomplished.

The present edition of the Micmac book is a faithful facsimile reprint of the Vienna edition of 1866, except that French and English headings were substituted to the German ones of the original edition. The cost amounts to \$2,000. The Father Provincial Benedict Wich contributed \$900. The Father Provincial Benedict Mueller gave \$300. Father Fidelis Meier collected \$162, the Fathers Thomas Petri and Angelus Seikel each \$50, and the Fathers Cyprian, Sigmund, Philip, Alphonse and Wendeline smaller sums. Two secular priests, O. Strehl of Chicago, and J. M. Kasel of Milwaukee, contributed each \$10, and Right Rev. J. R. Leonard, Bishop of Rimouski, \$200. There are some Protestant Americanists who subscribed to the work taking a keen interest in the reissue of this venerable book compiled by a Catholic priest. Particular mention must be made of Mr. W. F. Ganong of Smith College, Mass.

Rev. C. W. Vernon (Cape Breton p. 100) writes: "The books printed in 1866 are strongly bound in leather with a flap to go round them as a protection against moisture. Father Guinan of Sydney, N.S., sent a copy of the Micmac book to the poet Longfellow soon after its publication. These books are now becoming very scarce and a new edition is badly needed.

This Micmac book has preserved the faith among the Micmacs during more than hundred years when they were deprived of the regular ministrations of a priest. Each Sunday in the absence of a priest the chief of the place gathered the Indians about him in the church, took with profound reverence the book into his hands, deciphered the hieroglyphics and then with great earnestness impressed upon the minds of his hearers its most important truths. And when the Catholic Indian was laid to rest eternal, the chief read the burial ritual from this book. Again when the Indian couples were united in the bonds of matrimony, the chief read the prayers of the Church from the Micmac Book. And in the homes of the lowly Indians the head of the family opened the Micmac Book each Sunday evening and on other occasions to read the instructions and prayers for the edification of his wife and children. And in this way the Micmac Book has taken the place

of a missionary for nearly a hundred and seventy years. In the exuberance of feelings of gratitude Father Kauder wrote on October 2, 1862, in the Preface of the Micmac Book: "Even after my death the Micmac tribe will be constantly reminded by this book (a masterpiece of printing by the Imperial Press at Vienna) of their greatest benefactor on earth, Yours Eminence (Cardinal Joseph Rauscher, President of the Leopoldinen-Verin and will never neglect to pray for Your Eminence."

May the Micmac Book in its new garb enter upon a long era of usefulness and may it ever so long continue to serve the Micmac tribe, the eldest daughter of the Church among the Indians of North America.



In the year 1629 the first Micmac Indian Mission in Cape Breton was conducted at St. Ann's, C.B., by Father Leclerc.

When the census of Acadia was taken in 1686 there was not in Cape Breton a single family of European descent. The Micmac Indians with possibly a few missionaries had sole possession of the Island.

In June 10, 1610, Grand Chief Henri Membertou with twenty others were baptised at Port Royal, Nova Scotia.

Dear Reader:

The History of Micmac Ideographic Manual you have just read is undoubtedly new and interesting to you. We feel confident therefore that you will appreciate the publication of this booklet.

We also feel confident that another booklet relating to the Micmac Indian Life, will be as equally interesting to you. It is now in a course of preparation and will be ready for publication in the near future. Be sure to have your copy when ready.

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